

### REMARKS

By this amendment, claims 1, 3 and 4 have been cancelled, claims 2, 7 and 8 have been amended, and claims 10-14 have been added. Thus, claims 2 and 5-14 are now active in the application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application are respectfully requested.

In items 1-4 on pages 2-4 of the Office Action, claims 1, 2 and 7-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Ritchie et al. (U.S. 6,354,556); and claims 3-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ritchie et al. in view of Ogasawara (JP 6-50374). These rejections are respectfully traversed in part, and are believed clearly inapplicable to the claims as now presented, for the following reasons.

Initially, it is noted that claim 1 has been cancelled, and claim 2 has been amended to incorporate therein all of the limitations of claim 1.

Thus, with exemplary reference to the drawing figures, claim 2 now sets forth a frame structure for an automobile seat, comprising: a frame 8 to be vertically movably mounted on a vehicle floor; a lifter L for adjusting a height of the frame 8; and a suspension unit S for absorbing vibration inputted to the frame 8; wherein the lifter L is integrally formed with the suspension unit S and comprises a torsion bar 18 to be rotatably mounted on the vehicle floor; wherein the lifter L further comprises a first link mechanism (e.g. 20, 24, 26, 28) through which the torsion bar 18 is connected to the frame 8, and an operating means (e.g. 30) connected to the first link mechanism (20, 24, 26), wherein height adjustments of a front end portion of the frame 8 are carried out via the first link mechanism (20, 24, 26) and height adjustments of a rear end portion of the frame 8 are carried out via a second link mechanism (e.g. 22, 32) by operating the operating means (e.g. 30).

In contrast to the present invention as recited in claim 2, the Ritchie et al. patent clearly does not disclose or suggest the inclusion of a torsion bar connected to the frame through a first link mechanism, as required by claim 2. More specifically, contrary to the Examiner's assertion that the Ritchie et al. patent shows that "a torsion bar (70) is rotatably mounted on the vehicle floor (14) by way of element (30); wherein said lifter (170) (24) (26) comprises a first link

mechanism (26) through which the torsion bar (70) is connected to the frame (22)," the element 70 disclosed in the Ritchie et al. patent (see Fig. 3) is not a torsion bar, but is rather simply a pivot pin (see, for example, column 4, lines 57-60 of Ritchie et al.) which pivotally connects the lower end portions of the respective link members 24, 26 to the base 30 for pivoting about axes 34 and 38. Further, the Ritchie et al. patent does not otherwise disclose or suggest the use of a torsion bar.

The Examiner cited the Ogasawara reference for disclosing "a suspension unit (10) comprising a magnet unit (unlabeled) having a movable magnetic (30) and stationary magnets (48) (50)." However, the disclosure of Ogasawara clearly provides no teaching or suggestion that would have obviated the above-discussed shortcomings of the Ritchie et al. patent.

Accordingly, it is believed apparent that claim 2 (which constitutes a combination of previous claims 1 and 2) is not anticipated by the Ritchie et al. patent. Furthermore, the difference between the invention of claim 2 and the Ritchie et al. patent is such that a person having ordinary skill in the art would clearly not have been motivated to modify the Ritchie patent or to make any combination of the references of record in such a manner as to result in or otherwise render obvious the present invention of claim 2. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 2, as well as claims 5-9 which depend therefrom, are clearly allowable over the prior art of record.

Again with exemplary reference to the drawing figures, new independent claim 10 sets forth a frame structure for an automobile seat, comprising: a frame 8 to be vertically movably mounted on a vehicle floor; a lifter L for adjusting a height of the frame 8; and a suspension unit S for absorbing vibration inputted to the frame 8; wherein the lifter L is integrally formed with the suspension unit S; wherein the lifter L comprises a torsion bar 18, and a user-operable adjuster mechanism (e.g. 56) operably coupled to the torsion bar 18 such that operation of the user-operable adjuster mechanism 56 causes twisting of the torsion bar 18; and wherein the torsion bar is operably coupled with the frame 8 to apply a lifting force to the frame 8, and such

that twisting of the torsion bar 18 causes change in a lifting force applied to the frame 8 by the torsion bar 18.

Again, as mentioned above, the Ritchie et al. patent does not disclose or suggest the inclusion of a torsion bar. As also noted above, the element 70 of the Ritchie et al. patent is merely a pivot pin, as is the element 72. In addition, the Ritchie et al. patent clearly fails to disclose or suggest a user-operable adjuster mechanism operably coupled to a torsion bar such that operation of the user-operable adjuster mechanism causes twisting of the torsion bar, and further wherein the torsion bar is operably coupled with the frame to apply a lifting force of the frame, and such that twisting of the torsion bar causes change in a lifting force applied to the frame by the torsion bar, as required by claim 10.

The Ogasawara reference, cited by the Examiner for disclosing a suspension unit comprising a magnet unit having a movable magnet and stationary magnets, provides no teaching or suggestion that would have obviated the above-discussed shortcomings of the Ritchie et al. patent.

Therefore, it is clear that claim 10 is not anticipated by the Ritchie et al. patent. Furthermore, the differences between the Ritchie et al. patent and the invention of claim 10 are such that a person of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to modify the Ritchie et al. patent or to make any combination of the references of record in such a manner as to result in or otherwise render obvious the present invention of claim 10. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 10, as well as claims 11-14 which depend therefrom, are clearly allowable over the prior art of record.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is clearly in condition for allowance. An early notice thereof is earnestly solicited.

If, after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner feels there are any issues remaining which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Yasuhide TAKATA et al.

By: 

Charles R. Watts  
Registration No. 33,142  
Attorney for Applicants

CRW/asd  
Washington, D.C. 20006-1021  
Telephone (202) 721-8200  
Facsimile (202) 721-8250  
January 12, 2006